Defense Minister Knocks UN for Ignoring When Palestinians Kill Palestinians

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By [Herb Keinon](http://www.jpost.com/Author/Herb-Keinon)

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Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman slammed the United Nations on Wednesday for ignoring the Palestinian- on-Palestinian killings in Gaza and Lebanon, while regularly condemning “justified Israeli actions against terrorism.”

Liberman’s comments, according to his spokesman, came during a telephone conversation on Wednesday with the UN’s Mideast envoy Nikolay Mladenov.

According to the statement, Liberman protested that the UN is ignoring a number of killings and executions that have happened in recent days among the Palestinians in the Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon, as well as in Gaza.

“The international community’s ignoring dozens of dead and wounded shows again the hypocrisy and the double standard that the world employs by ignoring these grave incidents, while on the other hand condemning Israel’s justified actions against terrorism,” he said.

Liberman, according to the statement, expects that the issue of intra-Palestinian killings will be raised at the next meeting of the UN Security Council.

Fighting between Fatah and a Sunni Islamist group in the Ain el-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon has killed at least four people, and wounded dozens more, in more than a week of fighting there.

And in Gaza, Hamas executed three men earlier this month for allegedly collaborating with Israel.

Mladenov’s office issued a “no comment” when asked about the phone call.

But in Geneva, Ravina Shamdasani, the spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, condemned “in the strongest terms the execution of three men in Gaza on Thursday, despite our appeal and those by other international and Palestinian organizations for the sentences not to go ahead.”

According to Shamdasani, these “executions were carried out in breach of Palestine’s obligations under international law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which places stringent conditions on the use of the death penalty.”

Shamdasani added: “We urge the authorities in Gaza to halt further executions and comply with Palestine’s obligations under international law. We also call on the State of Palestine to immediately establish an official moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to its abolition.”

On Saturday, Mladenov issued a statement saying that he was “deeply concerned” by growing tensions in Gaza.

He said that over the past decade the Palestinians in Gaza “have lived through four conflicts, with no freedom, unprecedented Israeli restrictions, a dire humanitarian crisis, high unemployment, an ongoing electricity crisis and the lack of political perspective.”

Mladenov called on all Palestinian factions to allow the Palestinian Government to assume its responsibility in Gaza. “Gaza is an integral part of the future Palestinian state and no efforts should be spared to bring about real national reconciliation that ends the division. Leaders have a responsibility to avoid escalation and bridge the growing divide between Gaza and the West Bank that further fragments the Palestinian people.”